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#23
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THE MAXX
maxximized

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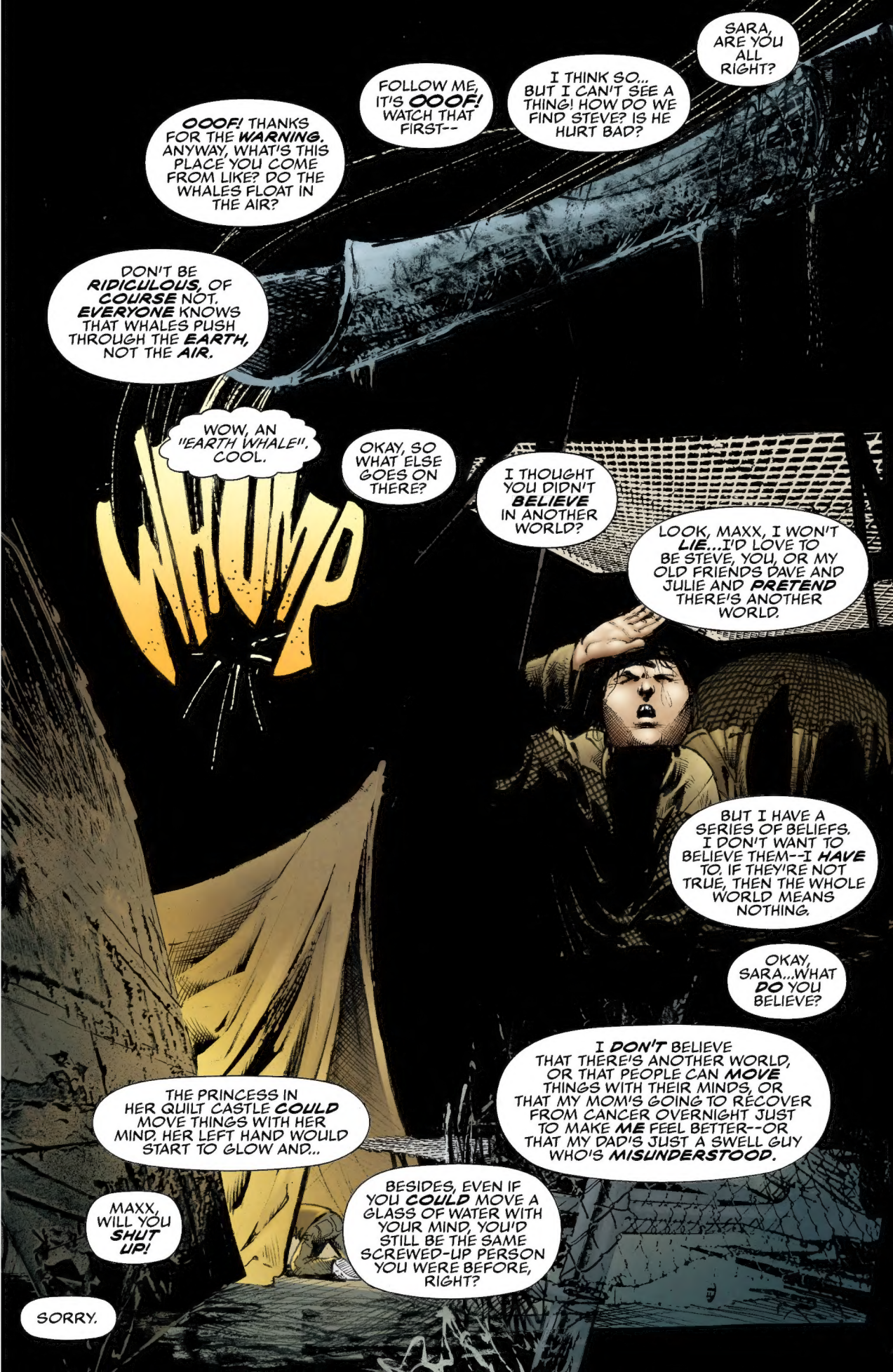
HAVING TO BELIEVE
SARA, ARE YOU AWAKE?
I AM NOW...
I'M HERE TO SHOW YOU PANGEA.
AT 3 A.M.?
YES.
CAN'T THIS WAIT UNTIL MORNING?
IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO STOP IAGO THE SLUG FROM KILLING AGAIN.
LOOK, NORBERT... I DUNNO...
SARA, IF I TOLD YOU THAT STEVE WAS HURT AND NEEDED YOUR HELP, AND I COULD TAKE YOU TO HIM, WOULD YOU COME WITH ME THEN?
OF COURSE NOT. YOU'RE VERY DISCRIMINATING.
-SIGH-
I DON'T GET OUT OF BED IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT FOR JUST ANYBODY...
OKAY, I CHECKED... HE'S NOT IN BED. BUT YOU BETTER NOT BE SCREWING WITH ME, NORBERT...

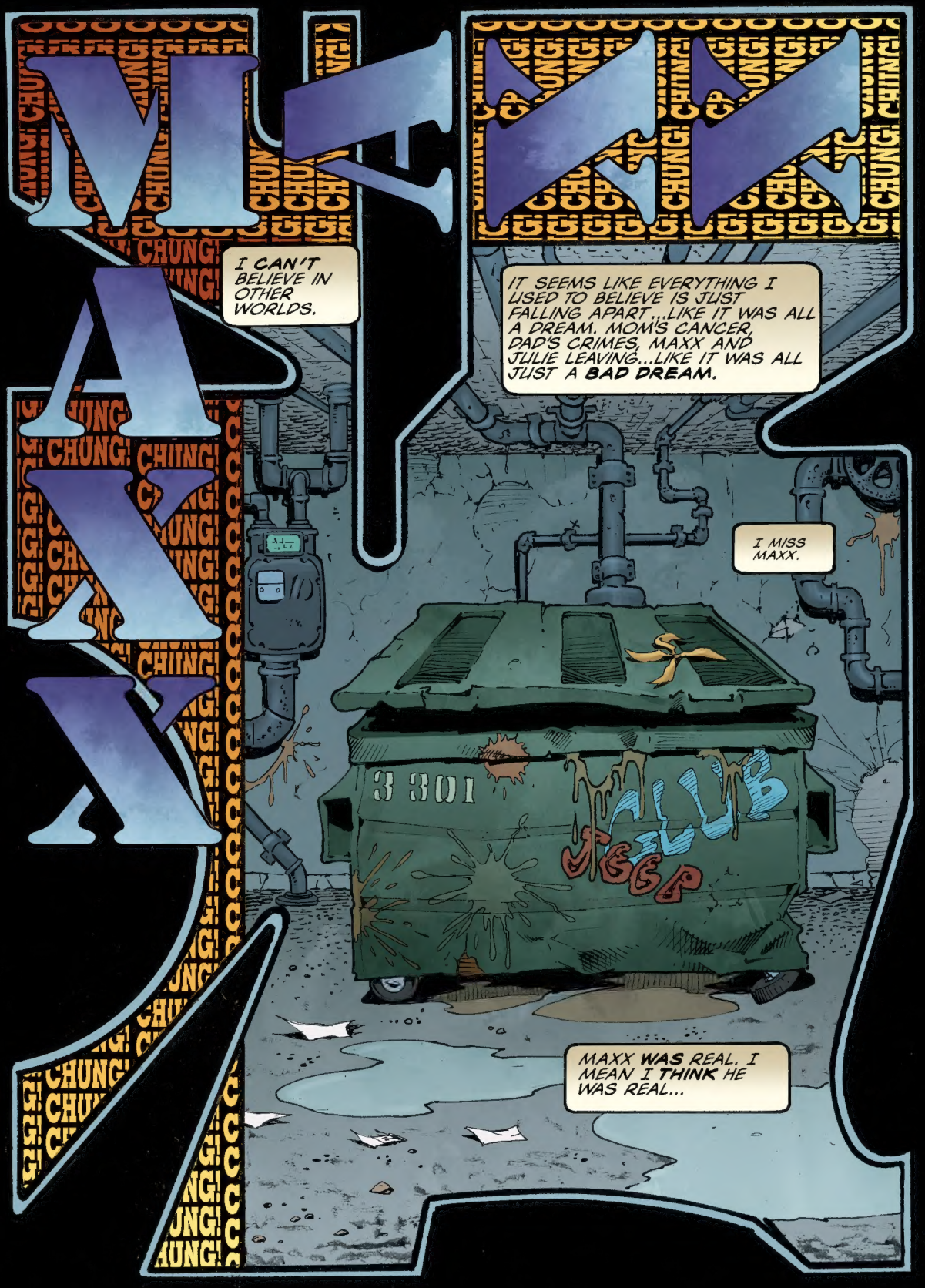
WE'RE HOME.
SARA, YOU'RE ABOUT TO ENTER A MAGICAL PLACE.
IN PANGEA THIS AREA ISN'T A JUNKYARD, BUT A POWER SPOT. CAN YOU FEEL IT?
A JUNKYARD...?
I FEEL COLD...AND LIKE I'M ABOUT TO BURST.
YES. I ALSO FEEL COLD AND EMPTY IN THIS PLACE...
NO, I'M FREEZING AND I HAVE TO PEE.
OH.
I CHOSE THIS SPOT TO REBUILD THE WORLD I CAME FROM, PANGEA.
COME, SARA. WE MUST TRAVEL AS CHILDREN UPON OUR HANDS AND KNEES THROUGH THE CASTLE OF QUILTS.
AND THAT'S WHERE WE'LL FIND STEVE?
THERE YOU WILL SEE THE FIRST FOUR, WHO WERE SENT BEFORE ME TO STOP IAGO. BUT ALL FAILED.
WHEN YOU LOOK UPON THEIR FACES, YOU WILL REMEMBER THEM, AND WILL RETURN TO PANGEA.
THUNDERPIG! LOOK OUT! SARA, DUCK!
WHAT?! I DON'T SEE--
WHUMP
WE'LL BE SAFE DOWN HERE. THUNDERPIGS ARE FOOLISH AND AFRAID. THEY WILL NOT JUMP DOWN A HOLE IF THEY DO NOT KNOW WHERE IT LEADS.
UNLIKE US.


SARA, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I THINK SO... BUT I CAN'T SEE A THING! HOW DO WE FIND STEVE? IS HE HURT BAD?
FOLLOW ME, IT'S OOOF! WATCH THAT FIRST--
OOOF! THANKS FOR THE WARNING. ANYWAY, WHAT'S THIS PLACE YOU COME FROM LIKE? DO THE WHALES FLOAT IN THE AIR?
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS, OF COURSE NOT. EVERYONE KNOWS THAT WHALES PUSH THROUGH THE EARTH, NOT THE AIR.
WOW, AN "EARTH WHALE", COOL.
OKAY, SO WHAT ELSE GOES ON THERE?
WHUMP
I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T BELIEVE IN ANOTHER WORLD?
LOOK, MAXX, I WON'T LIE...I'D LOVE TO BE STEVE, YOU, OR MY OLD FRIENDS DAVE AND JULIE AND PRETEND THERE'S ANOTHER WORLD.
BUT I HAVE A SERIES OF BELIEFS. I DON'T WANT TO BELIEVE THEM--I HAVE TO. IF THEY'RE NOT TRUE, THEN THE WHOLE WORLD MEANS NOTHING.
OKAY, SARA...WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE?
I DON'T BELIEVE THAT THERE'S ANOTHER WORLD, OR THAT PEOPLE CAN MOVE THINGS WITH THEIR MINDS, OR THAT MY MOM'S GOING TO RECOVER FROM CANCER OVERNIGHT JUST TO MAKE ME FEEL BETTER--OR THAT MY DAD'S JUST A SWELL GUY WHO'S MISUNDERSTOOD.
THE PRINCESS IN HER QUILT CASTLE COULD MOVE THINGS WITH HER MIND. HER LEFT HAND WOULD START TO GLOW AND...
BESIDES, EVEN IF YOU COULD MOVE A GLASS OF WATER WITH YOUR MIND, YOU'D STILL BE THE SAME SCREWED-UP PERSON YOU WERE BEFORE, RIGHT?
MAXX, WILL YOU SHUT UP!
SORRY.

KEEP GOING, WE'RE ALMOST THERE! CAN YOU FEEL THE MAGIC, MY PRINCESS?
OH, YEAH. CRAWLING ON MY HANDS AND KNEES THROUGH GARBAGE ALWAYS MAKES ME FEEL MAGICAL.
A CYNICAL ATTITUDE MASKS A BROKEN HEART.
DEEP.
NOW YOU'RE SURE HE'S RIGHT HERE, MAXX? WAIT-- I THINK I SEE THE OPENING...
YOU'VE MADE IT, MY PRINCESS. YOU'RE IN PANGEA!
I DON'T BELIEVE IT, MY CHILDHOOD TOYS. I HAVEN'T SEEN THEM SINCE I WAS A LITTLE GIRL!
PUMPKIN!
MR. YAKITY-TAKITY!
POOCHIE!
AND MR. DIAL-A-DOODLE!
THEY'RE REAL--
--AND THEY'RE HUGE!
PUMP

HEY WAAAIIT A MINUTE! I MUST BE LOSING MY MARBLES!
SARA, WAIT! YOU'RE SLIPPING BACK!
IT'S JUST JUNK! A CHEESY STONEHENGE BUILT TO LOOK LIKE MY OLD TOYS!
BUT WHY, NORBERT? AND WHERE THE HELL IS STEVE?
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE STEVE IS, DO YOU? HE'S PROBABLY OUT BOOZING IT UP WITH SKYE.
BOY, AM I A SUCKER.

THIS IS WHAT I GET FOR LETTING ANOTHER LOONEY INTO MY LIFE! DAMN IT, NORBERT!
I'VE FAILED. THE FOUR YOU MENTIONED WERE SENT HERE FROM PANGEA TO STOP IAGO...BUT WERE SLAIN. I BUILT THESE MONUMENTS IN THEIR MEMORY--AND I HOPED THAT SEEING THEM WOULD HELP YOU REMEMBER.
BONK
UH-OH. SARA, WATCH OUT--
SARA? SARA? WAKE UP!
HUMP
SHUT UP, NORBERT. I'M TRYING TO GET SOME SLEEP.
NOW WHERE WAS I? OH YEAH...
AMAZING DREAM of MAXX & JULIE


MAXX
I CAN'T BELIEVE IN OTHER WORLDS.
IT SEEMS LIKE EVERYTHING I USED TO BELIEVE IS JUST FALLING APART...LIKE IT WAS ALL A DREAM. MOM'S CANCER, DAD'S CRIMES, MAXX AND JULIE LEAVING...LIKE IT WAS ALL JUST A BAD DREAM.
I MISS MAXX.
MAXX WAS REAL, I MEAN I THINK HE WAS REAL...

...I MEAN I KNOW HE WASN'T REAL... BUT I BELIEVED IN HIM ANYWAY. I MEAN...
MUSTARD
CHUNG! CHUNG! CHUNG!
LOOKY, WUGS. THERE'S S'POSE T'BE SOME OLD BUM WHO LIVES INNA DUMPSTER HERE.
D'WE GET T'BURN HIM, HUH? DO WE, PABLO? HUH? HUH?
MUNCH. MUNCH. MUNCH.
M'BBEE.
GO'WAY. I'M WEAK AND DEFENSELESS! I'M JUST A SHORT, LI'L GUY.
SHORT, HUH? YOU GOT ENNY FOOD IN THERE? ENNY MONEY? I GOTTA MATCH OUT HERE WI' Y'R NAME ON IT!
SQUIRT!
YEAH, I'M SHORT...
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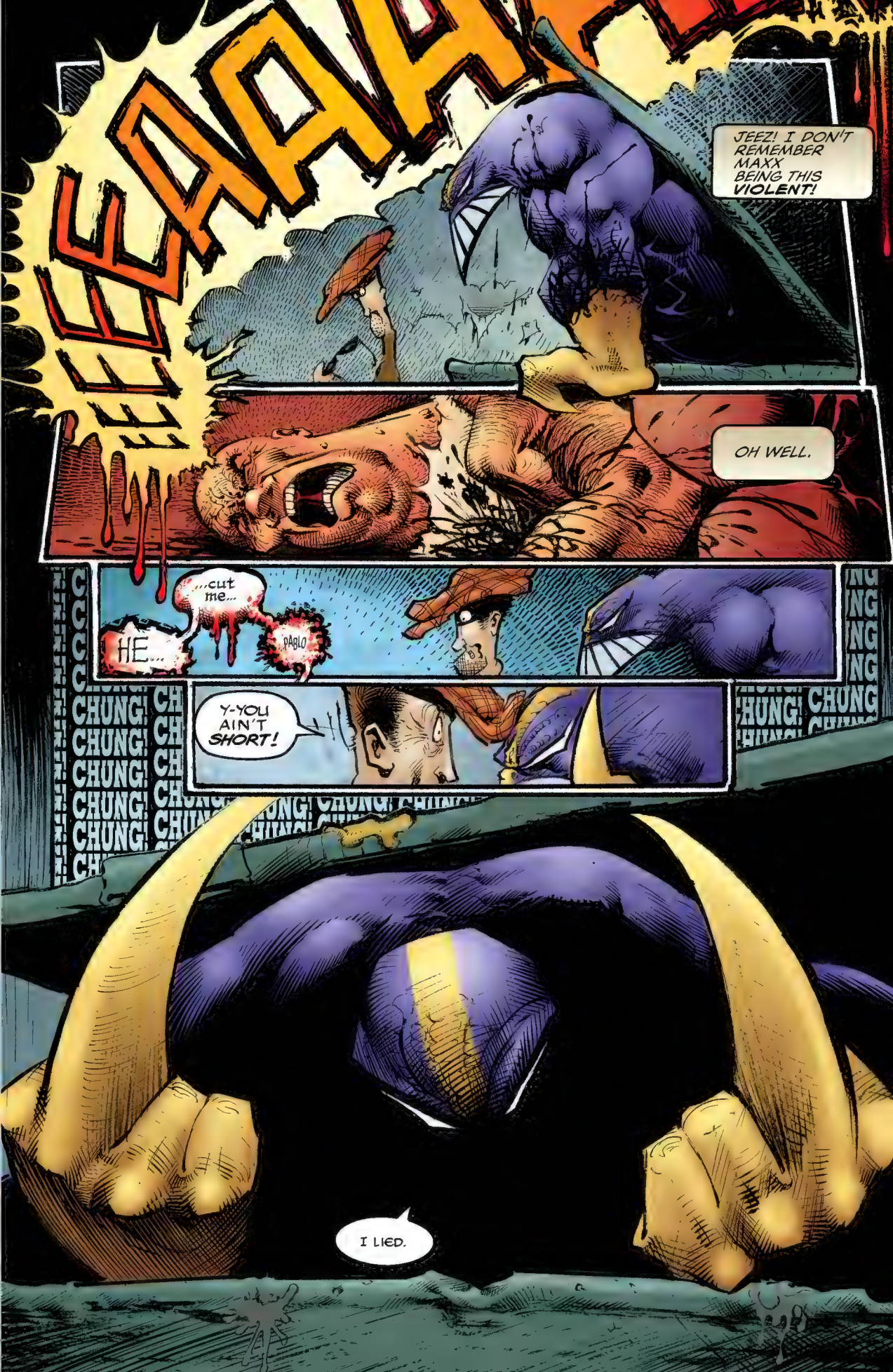
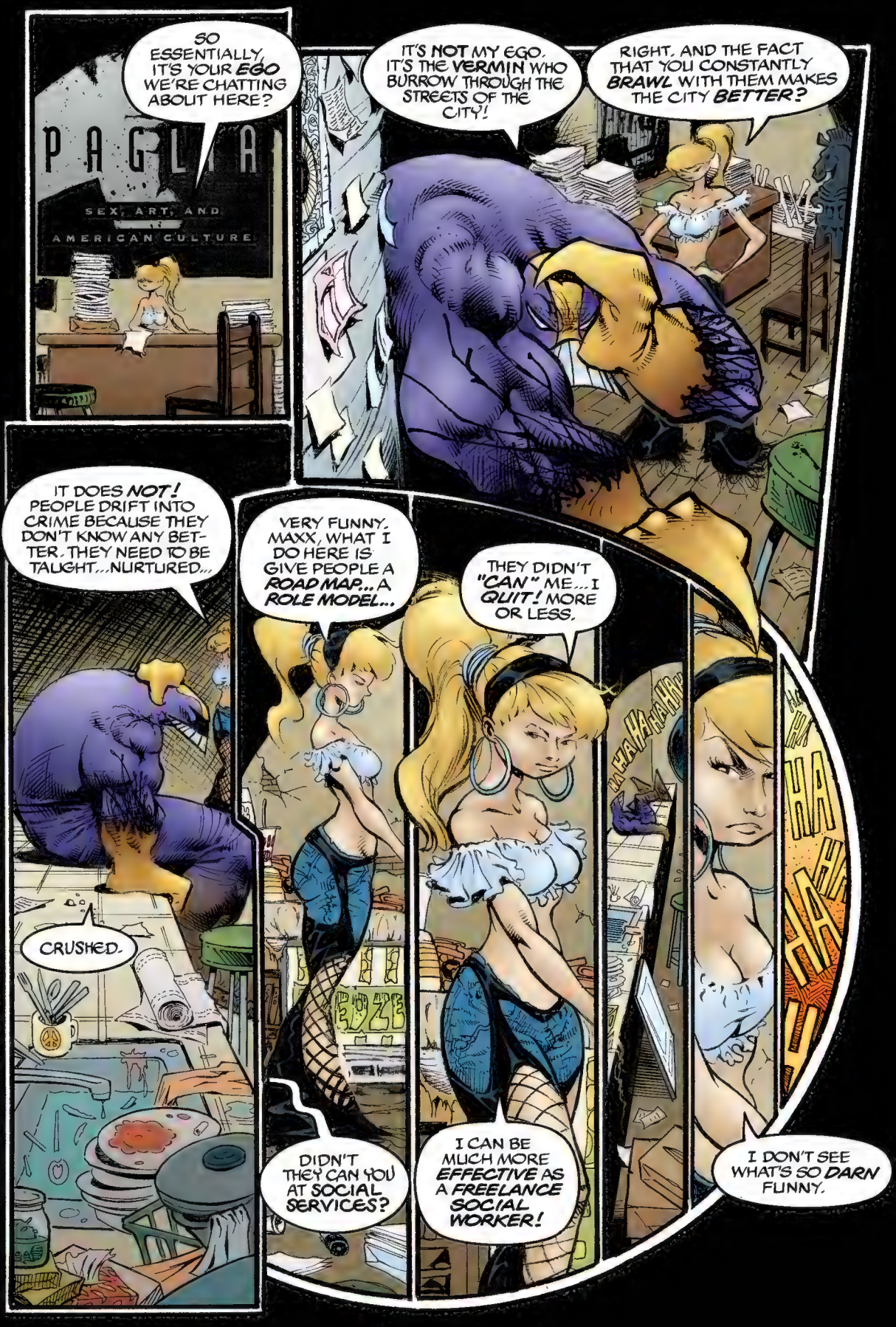
AAAAAAAEEEEE
BUT I C'N REACH YOU!

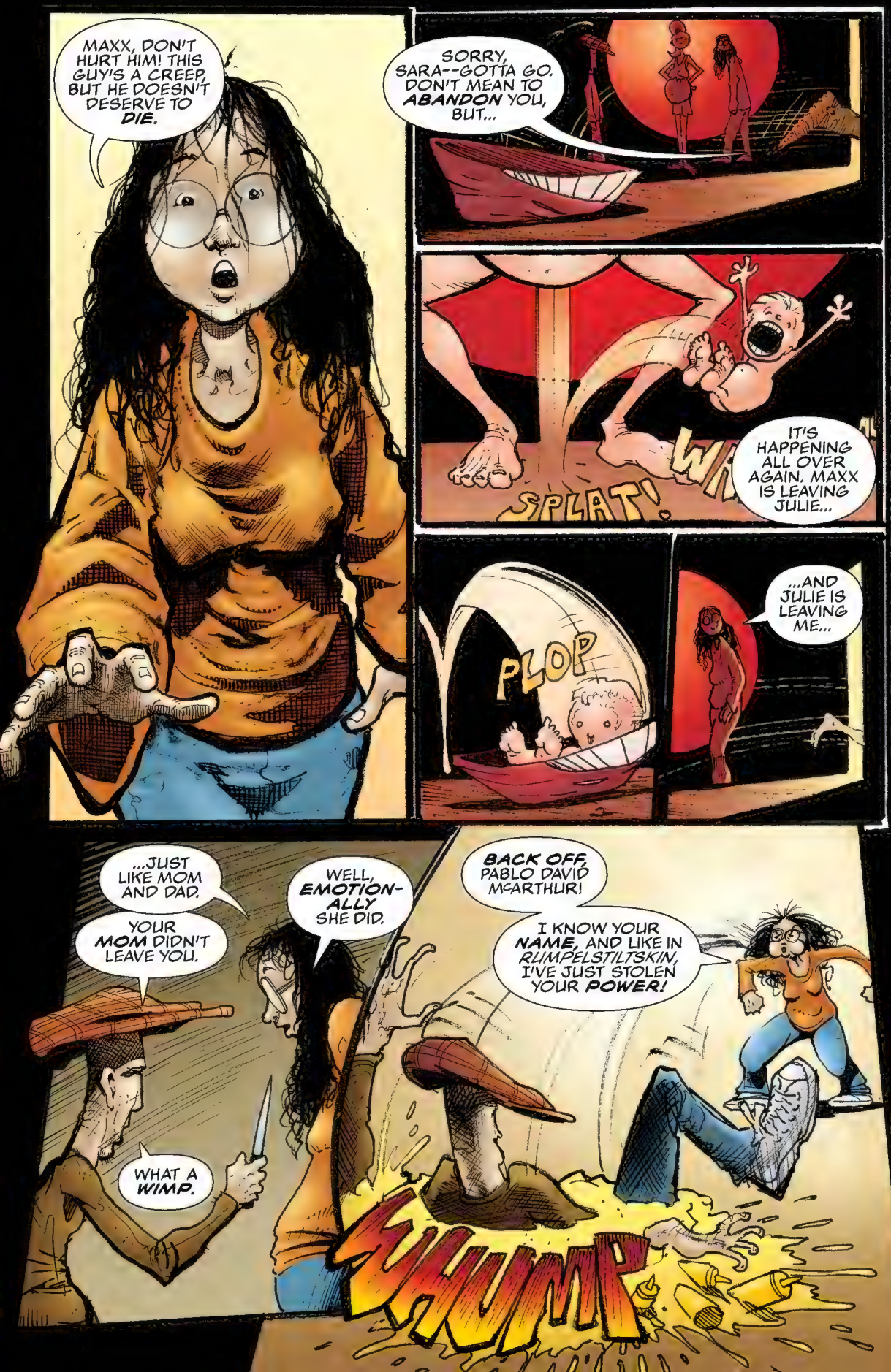

SLASH
JEEZ! I DON'T REMEMBER MAXX BEING THIS VIOLENT!
OH WELL.
....cut me...
HE...
PABLO
Y-YOU AIN'T SHORT!
CHUNG!
I LIED.

YOU AIN'T GETTIN' ME!
SPLAT!
NOBODY GETS PABLO McARTHUR!
WHAM WHAM WHAM WHAM WHAM WHAM
GOTTA GET AWAY! GOTTA GET HELP!
BOY, THAT MUST'VE HURT!
BUT WHAT WAS WORSE...
...WAS THE HUMILIATION!
THE CITY'S HERO.
BEATEN BY ONE GUY.
WITH A GARBAGE CAN LID!
NOW THAT'S THE MAXX I REMEMBER!


SO ESSENTIALLY, IT'S YOUR EGO WE'RE CHATTING ABOUT HERE?
PAGLIA
SEX, ART, AND AMERICAN CULTURE
IT'S NOT MY EGO, IT'S THE VERMIN WHO BURROW THROUGH THE STREETS OF THE CITY!
RIGHT, AND THE FACT THAT YOU CONSTANTLY BRAWL WITH THEM MAKES THE CITY BETTER?
IT DOES NOT! PEOPLE DRIFT INTO CRIME BECAUSE THEY DON'T KNOW ANY BETTER. THEY NEED TO BE TAUGHT... NURTURED...
VERY FUNNY, MAXX, WHAT I DO HERE IS GIVE PEOPLE A ROAD MAP... A ROLE MODEL...
THEY DIDN'T "CAN" ME... I QUIT! MORE OR LESS.
HA HA HA
CRUSHED.
DIDN'T THEY CAN YOU AT SOCIAL SERVICES?
I CAN BE MUCH MORE EFFECTIVE AS A FREELANCE SOCIAL WORKER!
I DON'T SEE WHAT'S SO DARN FUNNY.

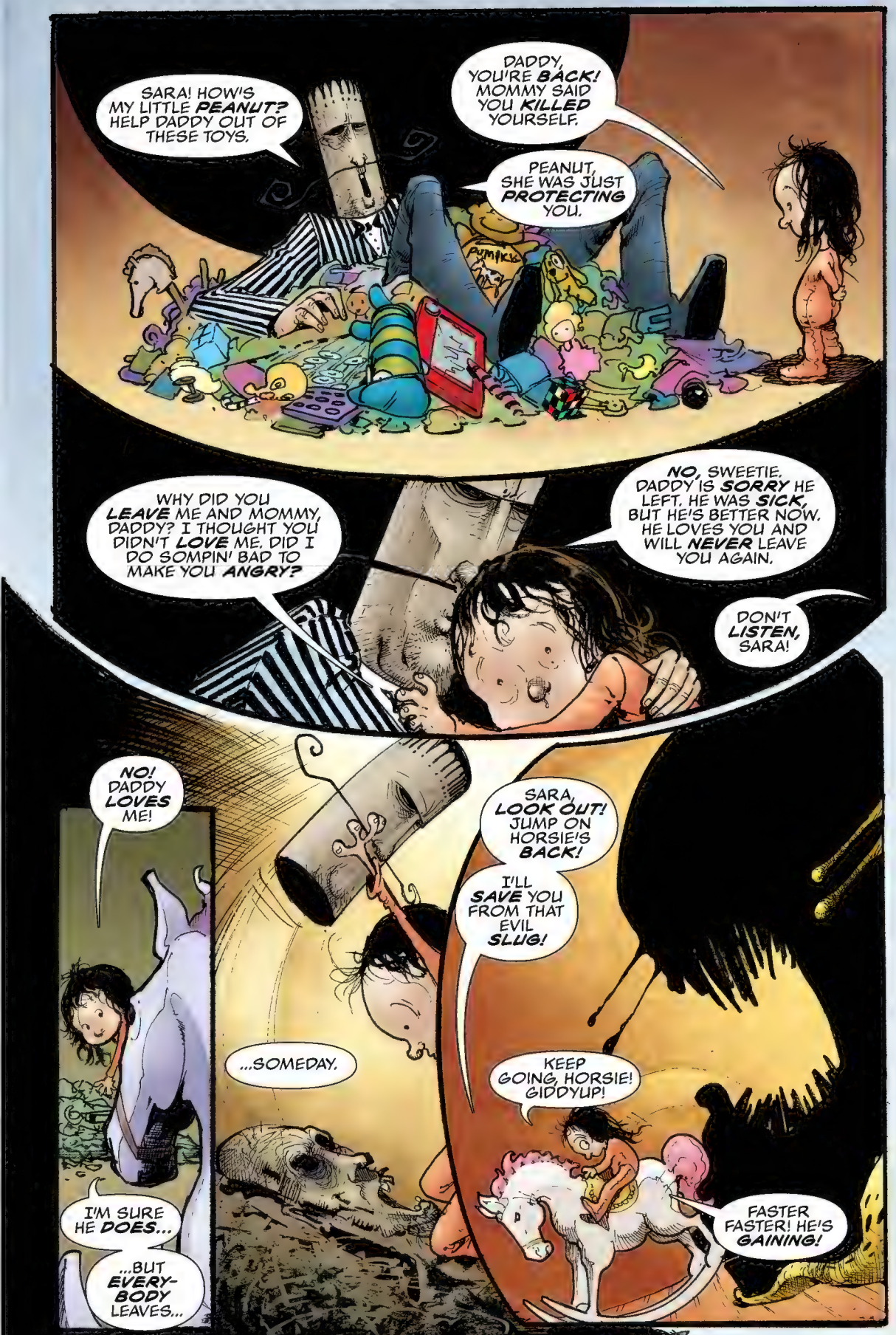
SO YOU HADDA JOB MOST PEOPLE'D RATHER EAT GROUND GLASS THAN DO... AND YOU QUIT SO YOU C'D DO IT FREE?
AND YOU THINK I'M NUTS?
WUMP!
I THINK YOU'RE A MAN WHO SEES AIR-WHALES. THERE'S A NEW COPY OF PSYCHOLOGY TODAY IN THERE. ENJOY.
I'LL BE OUT HERE HELPING PEOPLE!
Umm. HI. I CAME TO GET FOOD STAMPS... WELFARE... ADC...
FINE. GOOD. AND YOUR NAME IS PABLO, RIGHT?
McARTHUR. PABLO DAVID McARTHUR.
SEE, I JUST HAD LIKE A BUSINESS REVERSE. MY PARTNER...TOOK SICK.
Uh-huh. I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS TO TEST YOUR COPING SKILLS...
IF YOU WERE LOST IN A STRANGE AIR-PORT, WHAT WOULD YOU DO FIRST?
WELL, FIRST I'D SEE HOW MUCH OF IT WOULD BURN...

LOOK OUT, JULIE! HE HAS MUSTARD AND HE KNOWS HOW TO USE IT!
YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM ME, PABLO!
YOU CAN'T TOUCH ME, I'M IN A SOCIAL WORKER'S OFFICE.
OKAY, MAYBE YOU CAN, BUT THAT DOESN'T MAKE IT RIGHT.
EVERYBODY FREEZE!


MAXX, DON'T HURT HIM! THIS GUY'S A CREEP, BUT HE DOESN'T DESERVE TO DIE.
SORRY, SARA--GOTTA GO. DON'T MEAN TO ABANDON YOU, BUT...
SPLAT!
IT'S HAPPENING ALL OVER AGAIN. MAXX IS LEAVING JULIE...
PLOP
...AND JULIE IS LEAVING ME...
...JUST LIKE MOM AND DAD.
YOUR MOM DIDN'T LEAVE YOU.
WELL, EMOTIONALLY SHE DID.
WHAT A WIMP.
BACK OFF, PABLO DAVID McARTHUR!
I KNOW YOUR NAME, AND LIKE IN RUMPELSTILTSKIN, I'VE JUST STOLEN YOUR POWER!
WHUMP

MY NAME'S NOT RUMPEL-SCUMBLEDON.
WHO CARES! YOU'RE JUST LIKE EVERY STRANGE MAN MOM WARNED ME ABOUT--SEEDY, UNSHAVEN AND FULL OF MUSTARD!
MUSTARD
MOVE OVER!
HEY!
NOT ALL MEN--SOME ARE SAFE AND CUDDLY AND FULL OF KETCHUP!
WATCH IT!
OUCH!
YOU'RE YELLOW INSIDE AND OUT! OKAY, WHAT'S YOUR REAL NAME? AND DON'T MAKE ME SQUEEZE IT OUT OF YOU!
SARA, YOU'VE GOT ME ALL WRONG. I'M A VICTIM OF SOCIETY. I CAN'T BE HELD PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR MY ACTIONS.
DON'T LISTEN, SARA! HE'S LYING!
MY HORSIE! NORBERT!
HIS FACE IS A MASK! TAKE IT OFF AND HE'LL TELL YOU HIS REAL NAME!
YOU

I FORGIVE YOU, MR. GONE.
I DON'T.
I DO.
I SEE IT YOUR WAY, BUT I'M STILL PRETTY PISSED OFF.
I WANT YOU TO ROT IN HELL, YOU PATHETIC WORM.
GEE, SARA... MY OWN VICTIMS CAN'T DECIDE AMONG THEMSELVES WHETHER TO FORGIVE ME OR NOT.
THE IRONY IS, THERE'S ONLY ONE PERSON I WANT FORGIVENESS FROM. BUT MY DEFENSES ARE TOO STRONG. I'M NOT ABOUT TO ADMIT VULNERABILITY WHILE I'M MR. GONE. YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT.
DON'T STOP HERE, SARA, KEEP GOING! PEEL BACK ANOTHER LAYER!
HIS FACE IS ANOTHER MASK!
DADDY?


SARA! HOW'S MY LITTLE PEANUT? HELP DADDY OUT OF THESE TOYS.
DADDY, YOU'RE BACK! MOMMY SAID YOU KILLED YOURSELF.
PEANUT, SHE WAS JUST PROTECTING YOU.
WHY DID YOU LEAVE ME AND MOMMY, DADDY? I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T LOVE ME. DID I DO SOMPIN' BAD TO MAKE YOU ANGRY?
NO, SWEETIE. DADDY IS SORRY HE LEFT. HE WAS SICK, BUT HE'S BETTER NOW. HE LOVES YOU AND WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU AGAIN.
DON'T LISTEN, SARA!
NO! DADDY LOVES ME!
I'M SURE HE DOES...
...BUT EVERY-BODY LEAVES...
...SOMEDAY.
SARA, LOOK OUT! JUMP ON HORSIE'S BACK!
I'LL SAVE YOU FROM THAT EVIL SLUG!
KEEP GOING, HORSIE! GIDDYUP!
FASTER FASTER! HE'S GAINING!

DON'T STOP...HORSIE... KEEP GOING...
HUH? WHAT A FREAKY NIGHTMARE!
WELL...*THIS* IS KIND OF AWKWARD. AT LEAST ME AND NORBERT ARE THE ONLY ONES HERE...
SARA! YOU'RE *AWAKE!* FINALLY!
WHAT HAPPENED?
LISTEN-- IT'S NONE OF MY *BUSINESS*, BUT DON'T YOU THINK IT'S KIND OF *DANGEROUS* TO GO OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT TO A *JUNKYARD* AND GET HIT ON THE *HEAD?*
WE WERE LOOKING FOR *YOU*, YOU IDIOT.
ANYWAY, THAT GUY BROUGHT YOU HERE IN THE RAIN AND PROBABLY *SAVED* YOUR *LIFE.*
I GUESS HE'S 0-FOR-2 BETWEEN THE TWO OF US.
YEAH. I GUESS SO...

LISTEN, YOUR MOM CALLED. SHE WAS PRETTY GROGGY FROM PAIN KILLERS...
...BUT SHE SAID YOUR GRANDDAD, WAS BURIED, NOT CREMATED!
SO WHAT'S YOUR DAD UP TO, LYING ABOUT THE URN?
I KNEW THERE WAS SOMETHING PSYCHIC GOING ON WITH THAT THING...
SNORT SNORT
...WISH I COULD GET THE LID OFF...MAYBE WITH MY MIND.

THIS ISN'T HAPPENING. EVEN IF THERE WAS A HORSIE UNDER THIS BLANKET AND I COULD MOVE THINGS WITH MY MIND, I'M STILL THE SAME OLD SCREWED-UP SARA, RIGHT?
IT DOESN'T MEAN EVERY-THING I BELIEVE IS CRAP.
OF COURSE NOT. THEN WHY AM I STILL SHAKING?
SARA, COME WITH ME TO THE PIER. I'LL PROVE IAGO EXISTS.
WELL...
YEAH, LET'S GO TO THE PIER!
AND SO...
A SKIRT? I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER SEEN HER IN A SKIRT...
ME EITHER. INTERESTING...
WILL YOU TWO KNOCK IT OFF! EVERYTHING ELSE IS DIRTY!
I DON'T WANT IT IN THE HOUSE. GOD KNOWS WHAT'S IN IT.
WHY'D YOU BRING THE URN?

SO, NORBERT, YOU SAY YOU'RE ACTUALLY A "PART OF SARA'S PSYCHE" THAT CAME INTO OUR WORLD TO STOP A KILLER SLUG?
AND SARA'S A PRINCESS WHO MOVES THINGS WITH HER MAGIC HAND?
I WOULDN'T POINT FINGERS, STEVE.
LOOK, I KNOW YOU SEE ME OUT THERE EXPLORING PSYCHIC PHENOMENA, AND YOU GUYS WANT IN ON IT TOO. BUT YOU GOTTA UNDERSTAND I'M A TRAINED PROFESSIONAL. YOU GUYS ARE GONNA NEED MY HELP.
SO WHAT'S YOUR ADVICE?
LET'S CALL IT A NIGHT AND GO HOME FOR CEREAL AND PIZZA. WE NEED TO REPLENISH OUR PSYCHIC ENERGY.
STEVE, YOU'RE FIRED.
LOOK, THE TRUTH IS, YOU GUYS DON'T EVEN HAVE PSYCHIC ABILITIES! I'M THE ONE WHO DESERVES ESP AND MIND POWER. WHY DOES THIS ALWAYS HAVE TO BE ABOUT YOU, SARA? I'M THE ONE WHO'S STUDIED--
LOOK, STEVE, I CAN'T HELP IT IF I'VE GOT A GUY WHO FOLLOWS ME AROUND THINKING I'M MORE PSYCHIC THAN YOU-- I'M SORRY, BUT DEAL WITH IT! IF I BELIEVED FOR A MINUTE THAT I REALLY DID HAVE MAGIC POWERS I'D GIVE THEM TO YOU RIGHT NOW, OKAY?! HAPPY?
STEVE, WAIT--AW, GEEZ...

SARA... ARE YOU... OKAY?
NO.
IT'S TIME, SARA. LOOK AT ME, PLEASE.
WHY DON'T YOU LOOK?
I DON'T HAVE TO... PUT IT BACK ON.
SO YOU BELIEVE. YOU'LL HELP ME STOP IAGO?
SARA...?